Calder

Fuels Assessment

Areas within the one mile of home sites:

On the north side of the St. Joe river and on the flat area south of the river in sections 1-4, the area is grass and grass pasture land that is grazed and mostly green until late summer. Fires in this area would most likely burn through this fine, porous grass, especially in moderately- to extremely-droughty years. Mostly the area would be characterized as a fire fuel model 1, but if un-grazed and cured, would be better represented as a fire fuel model 3, particularly in winds greater than 10 miles/hour. Fires can be expected to be surface fires that move rapidly through cured grass. High rates of spread can be expected in un-grazed, cured areas.

All sections north of the river transition from grass pastureland into grass and shrub with a timber overstory. The steepness of the slope also increases while the terrain changes from flat to moderate slopes with short benches and rolling terrain within the one mile radius from homes in the community. This area is represented by fuel model 2. Fires in this type are generally surface fires with intensities governed by the amount of herbaceous fuel and down and dead stemwood.

Sections 1 and 6 (east of town) and all sections north of the river within the 3 mile radius of the community center change from open grass and shrub with a timber overstory to mixed conifer stands that range from open ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir mix to closed Douglas-fir or Douglas-fir/grand fir mix. Both fuel model 8 and 10 are represented in these areas. Fires in fuel model 8 are generally ground fires with occasional flare ups through fuel concentrations. Fires in fuel model 10 areas can be expected to burn with more intensity. Torching of individual trees, spotting, and crowning out can be expected.

South of the river, all areas transition from a short distance of flat grassy/pasture lands to closed canopy/mixed conifer stands with a heavy load of down material either from over maturity of the stand or from activity in the stands. Although there are areas with recent harvest where the slash is not completely abated, overall the area could be classified as a fuel model 10. Fires in this model can be expected to burn quite intensely, especially through areas of heavy ground fuel concentrations. As described above, crowning, spotting and torching and expected control problems can be expected.

Community Risk Assessment

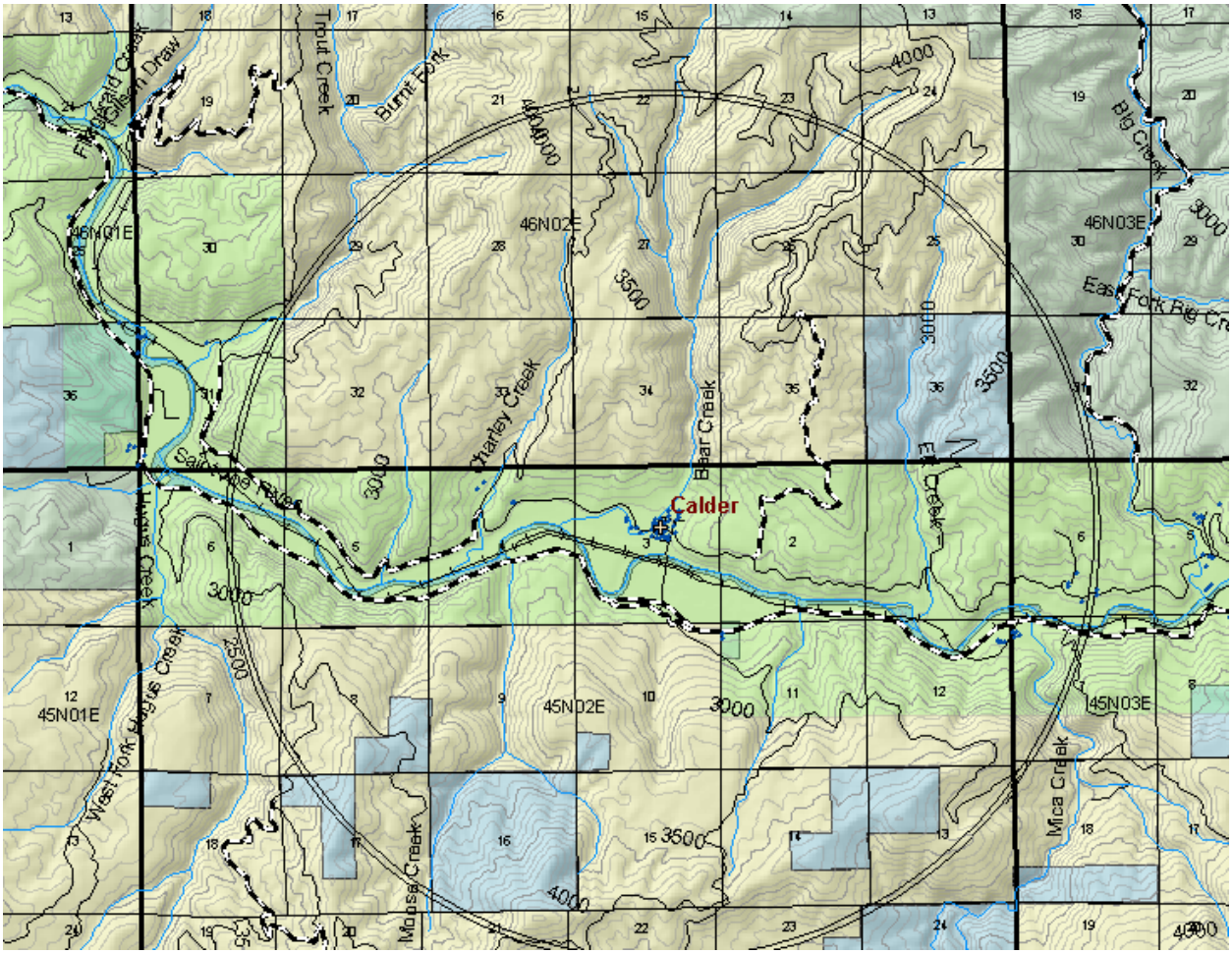
The 2000 census reports that there were approximately 130 individuals living in the community of Calder during that year. There are approximately 58 structures at-risk within 3 miles of the community of Calder. All of these structures are considered at moderate-risk due to the dispersion of these buildings and the high degree of wildland-rural interface characteristics in this

community. The vegetation in this area is predominately young, intermixed with grasses and shrubs. Although it is not a high-risk area currently, this may change in the next decade, depending on growth rates, and potential fire mitigation efforts in the area.

This community supports the county's Rural Fire District №4 with fire stations in Calder and further up the St. Joe River in Marble Creek. Wildland fire control efforts are provided by the Idaho Department of Lands–west St. Joe in St. Maries. However, the boundary of the protection zone for this agency extends just to the border of the 3-mile community buffer zone. Beyond this zone, to the east, the US Forest Service St. Joe protection district begins with offices in St. Maries and Avery.

Because of the reduced fuels risk, the moderate slopes, and the dispersion of the homes in this community, home site defensible zones are recommended for the residents of this community. These zones should follow the basic recommendations for homeowners in the rural–urban interface and include the removal of shrubs, ladder fuels, and dense forests within 150 feet of homes, with fire breaks strategically located around homes or groups of homes. Access issues should be addressed for each home and include an assessment of driveway width, the creation of turnouts, and an evaluation of weight restrictions posed by bridges and cattle guards. In some instances, evacuation routes should be marked while some routes will require road improvements to insure that homeowners will have access to these roads in an emergency.

Cattle grazing in this community is common and has served to reduce the late summer fuels in fields and forestlands around this community. This reduction of grasses and shrubs serves the community well and should be continued into the future. If it is discontinued for some reason, then the accumulation of grasses around home sites will need to be reevaluated.


Trout Creek
Burnt Fork
Big Creek
Charley Creek
Bear Creek
Calder
Mica Creek
Moose Creek
West Fork Joyce Creek
46N01E
46N02E
46N03E
45N01E
45N02E
45N03E
4000
3500
3000